

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

FROM: City of Fresno Planning and Development Department
2600 Fresno Street
Fresno, California 93721-3604

TO: X Fresno County Clerk
2220 Tulare Street – First Floor Lobby
Fresno, California 93721

_____ Office of Planning & Research
P.O. Box 3044, Room 212
Sacramento, California 95812-3044

Project Title: Environmental Assessment No. P22-01651

Project Location: 2219 Orchard Street; Located on the west side of North Orchard Avenue between East Yale and East Clinton Avenues in Fresno, California. (APNs: 446-020-07 & 446-020-08)

Project Location – city: City of Fresno **Project Location- county:** County of Fresno

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project: Conditional Use Permit Application No. P22-01651, was filed by Michael Osborn of Provost & Pritchard Consulting Group on behalf of St. George Greek Orthodox Church and pertains to the 4.12 acres located at 2219 North Orchard Street. The applicant proposes to demolish the existing Social Hall and Sunday School Buildings, as well as the storage building and parking lot to construct a new two-story community center, 300 seat-amphitheater, and ±180 square foot modular guard station totaling ±35,850 square feet. The applicant also proposes the addition of 223 parking stalls.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: City of Fresno

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Michael Osborn of Provost and Pritchard Consulting Group
286 West Cromwell Avenue
Fresno CA, 93711

Exempt Status: (check one)

- Ministerial - PRC § 21080(b)(1); CEQA Guidelines §15268
- Declared Emergency - PRC § 21080(b)(3); CEQA Guidelines §15269(a)
- Emergency Project - PRC § 21080(b)(4); CEQA Guidelines §15269(b) and (c)
- Categorical Exemption – CEQA Guidelines §15332/Class 32**
- Statutory Exemption – PRC § _____

Reasons why project is exempt:

This project is exempt under Section 15332/Class 32 of the California Environmental

Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines as follows:

Under Section 15332/Class 32, the proposed project is exempt from CEQA requirements when the project is characterized as in-fill development meeting the following conditions:

a) The project is consistent with the applicable general plan designation and all applicable general plan policies as well as with applicable zoning designation and regulations.

By current standards, the subject site is identified as “in-fill” within an urban setting. This project is located on a site within the City limits and is consistent with the Fresno General Plan designation, policies, and zoning. The existing (*Residential Multi-Family, Medium High Density*) zone districts are consistent with the Residential Multi-Family – Medium High Density planned land use designations approved for this site by the Fresno General Plan, Downtown Community Plan, and the Fresno County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan.

b) The proposed development occurs within city limits on a project site of no more than five acres substantially surrounded by urban uses.

The subject property is located on a site of approximately ±4.12 acres, which is less than the five-acre maximum, and is surrounded by other urban developments and uses.

c) The project has no value as habitat for endangered, rare or threatened species

The project site contains previously disturbed land and surrounding developments consists of a community and religious assembly’s, multi-family residential, and cultural institutions; therefore, the site has no value as habitat for endangered, rare, or threatened species.

d) Approval of the project would not result in any significant effects relating to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality.

Traffic

Senate Bill (SB) 743 requires that relevant CEQA analysis of transportation impacts be conducted using a metric known as vehicle miles traveled (VMT) instead of Level of Service (LOS). VMT measures how much actual auto travel (additional miles driven) a proposed project would create on California roads. If the project adds excessive car travel onto our roads, the project may cause a significant transportation impact.

The State CEQA Guidelines were amended to implement SB 743, by adding Section 15064.3. Among its provisions, Section 15064.3 confirms that, except with respect to transportation projects, a project’s effect on automobile delay shall not constitute a significant environmental impact. Therefore, LOS measures of impacts on traffic facilities are no longer a relevant CEQA criteria for transportation impacts.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b)(4) states that “[a] lead agency has discretion to evaluate a project’s vehicle miles traveled, including whether to express the change in absolute terms, per

capita, per household or in any other measure. A lead agency may use models to estimate a project's vehicle miles traveled and may revise those estimates to reflect professional judgment based on substantial evidence. Any assumptions used to estimate vehicle miles traveled and any revision to model outputs should be documented and explained in the environmental document prepared for the project. The standard of adequacy in Section 15151 shall apply to the analysis described in this section.”

On June 25, 2020, the City of Fresno adopted CEQA Guidelines for Vehicle Miles Traveled Thresholds, dated June 25, 2020, pursuant to Senate Bill 743 effective on July 1, 2020. The thresholds described therein are referred to herein as the City of Fresno VMT Thresholds. The City of Fresno VMT Thresholds document was prepared and adopted consistent with the requirements of CEQA Guidelines Sections 15064.3 and 15064.7. The December 2018 Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA (Technical Advisory) published by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR), was utilized as a reference and guidance document in the preparation of the Fresno VMT Thresholds.

The City of Fresno VMT Thresholds adopted a screening standard and criteria that can be used to screen out qualified projects that meet the adopted criteria from needing to prepare a detailed VMT analysis.

The City of Fresno VMT Thresholds Section 3.0 regarding Project Screening discusses a variety of projects that may be screened out of a VMT analysis including specific development and transportation projects. For development projects, conditions may exist that would presume that a development project has a less than significant impact. These may be size, location, proximity to transit, or trip-making potential. For transportation projects, the primary attribute to consider with transportation projects is the potential to increase vehicle travel, sometimes referred to as “induced travel.”

Staff conducted research using the Fresno Council of Governments (COG) Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Screening Tool to determine the VMT for the proposed project. The adopted threshold of significance is 13%, which means that projects that generate VMT in excess of 13% than the existing regional VMT per capita or per employee would have a significant environmental impact; projects that meet the 13% threshold are determined to have a less than significant effect on regional VMT. Using the COG tool, the proposed community center building and amphitheater project is located within a low-VMT zone and is estimated to generate 14.26 VMT which is lower than the 25.60 VMT (13%) threshold.

Noise

The project is a new two-story community center, 300 seat-amphitheater, parking lot and modular guard station development. The project site is in a developed neighborhood adjacent to existing community and religious assembly's, multi-family residential, and cultural institutions; therefore, the project would not result in a significant amount of noise compared to other adjacent uses and would be conditioned to comply with any applicable noise standards of the Citywide Development Code.

In addition, a noise assessment was also prepared in October 2022, based on the analysis conducted, to minimize operational noise impacts to nearby land uses and to better ensure compliance with City noise standards, the following measures are recommended; Onsite events involving the use of the amphitheater should be limited to the daytime hours of 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m.; Use of amplified sound systems for amphitheater events should be prohibited unless noise monitoring is conducted to verify that the event(s) would not exceed the City's noise standards. With the implementation of the above measures, predicted operational noise levels would not exceed the City's noise standards.

Air Quality

The project is conditioned to comply with any applicable regulations from the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District and the project is subject to review by the agency regarding air quality during construction and operation. The project as described will not occur at a scale or scope with potential to contribute substantially or cumulatively to existing or projected air quality violations or impacts.

Water Quality

The project is further conditioned to comply with any applicable conditions from Public Works or Utilities Department to ensure the project won't have an effect on water quality.

e) *The site can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services.*

Given the surrounding properties and neighborhoods have been substantially developed and utilities and public services already exist in the area, the site can be adequately served by all required utilities, including sewer, water, and solid waste, as well as public services.

None of the exceptions to Categorical Exemptions set forth in the CEQA Guidelines, Section 15300.2 apply to the project. Furthermore, the proposed project is not expected to have a significant or cumulative effect on the environment. The project is not located on a hazardous waste site, a historical resource, or adjacent to a scenic highway. A categorical exemption, as noted above, has been prepared for the project and the area is not environmentally sensitive.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Steven Lieng, Planner
City of Fresno Planning and Development Department

Full telephone no. (559) 621-8007

If filed/signed by applicant:

Attach certified document of exemption finding (check if attached)

Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? Yes No

Signature: Ralph Kachadourian Date: February 6, 2023

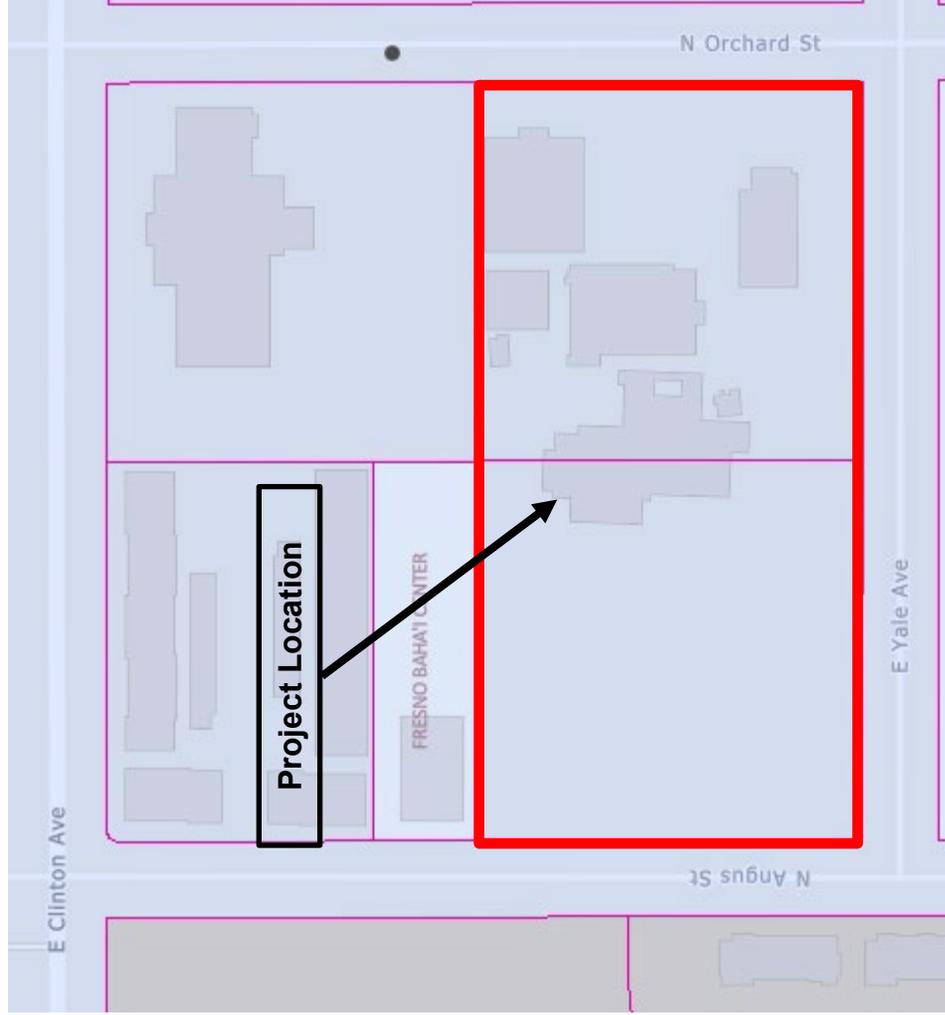
Printed Name and Title: Ralph Kachadourian, Supervising Planner
City of Fresno Planning and Development Department

Signed by Lead Agency Signed by applicant

Attachments: Vicinity Map & Categorical Exemption

VICINITY MAP/SITE LOCATION

2219 North Orchard Street



Planning and Development Department
2600 Fresno Street, Room 3043 · Fresno, CA 93721 · Phone (559) 621-8277

**CITY OF FRESNO
CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR
CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT APPLICATION NO. P22-01651**

THE PROJECT DESCRIBED HEREIN IS DETERMINED TO BE CATEGORICALLY EXEMPT FROM THE PREPARATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 19 OF THE STATE CEQA GUIDELINES.

APPLICANT: Michael Osborn of Provost and Pritchard Consulting Group
(559) 449-2700
mosborn@ppeng.com

PROJECT LOCATION: St. George Greek Orthodox Church at 2219 North Orchard Street; located on the west side of North Orchard Avenue between East Yale and East Clinton Avenues in Fresno, California. (APNs: 446-020-07 & 446-020-08)

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Conditional Use Permit Application No. P22-01651, was filed by Michael Osborn of Provost & Pritchard Consulting Group on behalf of St. George Greek Orthodox Church and pertains to the 4.12 acres located at 2219 North Orchard Street. The applicant proposes to demolish the existing Social Hall and Sunday School Buildings, as well as the storage building and parking lot to construct a new two-story community center, 300 seat-amphitheater, and ±180 square foot modular guard station totaling ±35,850 square feet. The applicant also proposes the addition of 223 parking stalls. The parcel is zoned RM-1 (*Residential Multi-Family, Medium High Density*) zone district.

This project is exempt under Section 15332/Class 32 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines as follows:

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a) The project is consistent with the applicable general plan designation and all applicable general plan policies as well as with applicable zoning designation and regulations.

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b) The proposed development occurs within city limits on a project site of no more than five acres substantially surrounded by urban uses.

The subject property is located on a site of approximately ±4.12 acres, which is less than the five-acre maximum, and is surrounded by other urban developments and uses.

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Conditional Use Permit Application No. P22-01651
EA - Categorical Exemption
February 6, 2023

Date: February 6, 2023
Prepared By: Steven Lieng, Planner

Submitted by: *Ralph Kachadourian*
Ralph Kachadourian
Supervising Planner
City of Fresno
Planning & Development Department
(559) 621-8277